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## Licensing of Canadian Nurses

In June, Governor Engler signed Public Act No. 441 that temporarily eliminates some of the potential barriers health professionals licensed in Canada encounter when seeking licensure in Michigan. For the nursing profession, the legislation provides for the following:

- 1) Until January 1, 2004, the requirement that a Canadian nurse obtain CGFNS certification prior to taking the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) is no longer in effect. Although the current language regarding the CGFNS requirement will remain in the Board of Nursing Administrative Rules, this provision cannot be enforced prior to January 1, 2004.
- 2) Canadian nurses, educated in Canada and currently licensed in good standing, may be licensed in Michigan without taking the NCLEX IF the Michigan Board of Nursing determines that the Canadian national nursing exam is "substantially equivalent" to the NCLEX.

The second provision required the Board of Nursing to review information regarding the Canadian licensing exam and the NCLEX to determine if the Canadian exam is "substantially equivalent."

The Board of Nursing reviewed a report issued by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) that examined differences in the content and administration of the Canadian licensing exam and NCLEX. The Board of Nursing also reviewed general statistics about how many RNs were issued temporary licenses in Michigan based on their Canadian licensure and the performance of first time test takers from Michigan, US and Canadian educational programs.

At the Board of Nursing meeting on September 5, 2002 the Board addressed the question of whether the Canadian national licensing exam for nurses is "substantially equivalent" to the NCLEX. The Board determined that the Canadian exam is not "substantially equivalent" to NCLEX. Therefore, nurses educated and licensed in Canada will still be required to take the NCLEX as part of the application process in Michigan.

The Board did make a recommendation that the Administrative Rules of the Board of Nursing be revised to eliminate the CGFNS requirement for nurses educated in Canada and currently licensed in Canada in good standing. The Licensure Committee of the Board of Nursing will begin working on the rules revision process. The goal is to complete the rules promulgation process before Public Act 441 sunsets on January 1, 2004.